A Message From the Superintendent

Dear Members of the Clark Schools Community,

These past two winter months have been extremely active ones for our district. For example, the Clark Education Fund (CEF), a group that gives most generously to our schools, awarded three mini-grants. The first of these grants was given to our Grades K to 5 Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) teachers Kathleen Scarola and Cindy Tarello for Magformers, i.e., magnetic shapes that can be used to design structures and other objects. This learning tool will allow our students to engage in hands-on explorations of how to manipulate shapes and, through these experiences, the students will be employing STEAM-related problem-solving skills. The second grant was awarded to VRS Teachers Nicole Reagan and Kelly Cahill to attend the “Get Your Teach On” conference in Washington, DC at the end of March. This conference will provide training on the most current research-based strategies aimed at creating more successful and engaging classrooms. Mrs. Reagan and Mrs. Cahill will share this professional learning with their colleagues upon their return so that more of our teachers can benefit from the key takeaways.

The third grant, prepared by CHK Principal Richard Delmonaco, was for the Rutgers Science Explorer Bus to visit our middle school for three days in June. Through this visit, all of our seventh-graders will be given a hands-on, real-life laboratory application of the concept of DNA that they studied during the school year. I would also like to thank DonorsChoose.org for the items that they donated for our special education transition program and Investors Foundation for their $1,000 donation towards our ALJ special education iPad program. We are extremely grateful for the strong partnerships that our schools have with our larger community and the good, supportive work of these groups. As a district, we also want to serve as a resource for the community in any and all possible ways.

Our staff in-service sessions on the afternoon of February 16 proved to be good means for our teachers to enhance their professional learning. Our preschool teachers received wellness training while our kindergarten and first-grade teachers reviewed technology resources together as a group. Ways to support struggling readers was the focus of the second-grade training while an analysis of Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) mathematics scores was conducted by our third through fifth-grade teachers. Our middle and high school teachers participated in two training sessions, i.e., one focused on fostering resilience in students coping with loss and another centered around student meditation. Please remember to visit our district website to view our Parent University virtual sessions. If you have not already done so, like us on Facebook @Clarkpublicschools and follow us on Twitter @ClarkTwpSchools to become aware of these sessions as they become available and to gain knowledge of the face-to-face sessions that we offer.

Congratulations go to our juniors and seniors who were recently inducted into the National Honor Society. This is one of the most prestigious honors that a high school student can earn. We are also extremely proud of our three ALJ students who reached the state level of their DECA competitions. This extracurricular activity provides students with real-life simulations of the business concepts that they are studying in class. At the end of January, a VRS International Day was held as a means of outreaching to our community regarding cultural diversity; a similar event is being planned for later in the year at FKH. The second set of sessions for our new afterschool STEAM program at CHK, Coding for Cougars, has begun and a middle school YMCA track and field club will be beginning in mid-March. As you will see throughout this issue of Pride, our athletic teams throughout the district displayed a level of greatness of which we are very proud during these winter months. In fact, the ALJ bowling team captured the North II Group 1 Sectional State Championship.

It seems as though this current school year just began. As a result, it is difficult to believe that we are already looking towards next year. The ALJ 18-19 Program of Studies, approved at the December 5 Board of Education meeting and posted on the ALJ website, contains a host of exciting offerings and highlights our high school as being a “School of Choice.” ALJ students can all develop curricular programs that meet their unique needs and prepare them for the most competitive of universities.
and careers through close collaboration with their guidance counselors. As a reminder, our high school moved to an A/B block schedule model last year and, as a result, students are able to take an additional course each year and be provided with an activity period during the actual school day. Our third through eleventh-grade students are preparing to take their Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests this spring and these assessment results, along with current course performance and teacher recommendations, will help guide placement decisions for the upcoming year. Our eighth-graders have registered for ALJ while our current high school students have moved through the course selection process.

As we approach what will hopefully be warmer weather, I want to thank you again for the immense support of our schools. I hope you and your families enjoy the spring break and holidays. As always, I am looking forward to seeing you at our events and around town.

Yours sincerely,
Edward Grande

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**ALJ Hosts Alumni Panel for Juniors and Seniors**

In January, the Arthur L. Johnson High School Guidance Department hosted an ALJ Alumni Panel where former Crusaders shared with current juniors and seniors what they learned about applying to college and attending their first semester.

The panel, led by Erica Stasio, ALJ School Counselor, included a series of topics including choosing a school, living away from home, and deciding on a major. Other topics included how ALJ prepared them for college and applying for scholarships.

“The alumni panel is a way to bridge the gap between students who recently left ALJ and students who are leaving soon. Their insight is invaluable and relevant. We hope the current ALJ students take in what the alumni have to say and consider their advice as they decide on their plans for next year,” stated Stasio.

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**Coding for Cougars**

Students at Carl H. Kumpf Middle School are learning how to code in the school’s Coding for Cougars Program. The program introduces Kumpf students to “coding” and how to improve computer skills and knowledge. Students learn to code in Python, a professional programming language, making the skills learned relevant and applicable to many careers. Kumpf teachers Matthew Serwedes and Marlena Sundo guide students through concepts and sample projects using a coding and computational thinking approach. Projects include video game design and graphic design simulations.

Carl H. Kumpf Middle School Principal Rick Delmonaco stated, “We are pleased so many students have taken advantage of the Coding for Cougars program. It is a great way for students to get introduced to computer program coding. So much of our lives will revolve around “coding” in the future; it is great that our students can learn these concepts at an early age.”
Arthur L. Johnson High School to Participate in the College Board AP Capstone Diploma Program

The AP Capstone Diploma Program Focuses on College-Level Independent Research, Collaborative Teamwork, and Communication and Writing Skills Crucial for College and Career Success

Arthur L. Johnson High School is one of approximately 1,500 schools worldwide to implement the AP Capstone™ diploma program an innovative program that allows students to develop skills that matter most for college success, such as research, collaboration, and communication. The program consists of two courses taken in sequence: AP® Seminar and AP Research. Developed in direct response to feedback from higher education faculty and college admission officers, AP Capstone complements the in-depth, subject-specific study of other Advanced Placement® courses and exams. Developed in direct response to feedback from higher education faculty and college admission officers, AP Capstone complements the in-depth, subject-specific study of other Advanced Placement® courses and exams. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher on AP Seminar and AP Research assessments and on four additional AP Exams of their choosing will earn the AP Capstone Diploma™. This signifies their outstanding academic achievement and attainment of college-level academic and research skills. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher on both AP Seminar and AP Research assessments only (but not on four additional AP Exams) will earn the AP Seminar and Research Certificate™.

ALJ will start AP Seminar in the fall of 2018. Superintendent Edward Grande stated, “We are excited for the Capstone program. This new offering will allow our students to conduct research at a university level while still in high school, earning college credit for doing so and a special diploma acknowledgement through the College Board.”

The AP Seminar course, typically taken in 10th or 11th grade, equips students with the ability to look at academic or real-world issues from multiple perspectives. Through a variety of materials—articles to research studies to foundational and philosophical texts—students tackle complex questions; understand and evaluate opposing viewpoints; interpret and synthesize information; and construct, communicate, and defend evidence-based arguments. Teachers have flexibility to cover local, regional, national, and global topics relevant to their students, around themes such as education, innovation, sustainability, and technology. Students are assessed through a team project and presentation, an individual project and presentation, and an end-of-course written exam. By tapping into students’ personal interests, AP Capstone gives students from a wide range of backgrounds an entry point into stimulating coursework.

In the subsequent AP Research course, students design, plan, and conduct a yearlong research-based investigation on a topic of individual interest, documenting their process with a portfolio. Students build on skills developed in the AP Seminar course by learning how to understand research methodology; employ ethical research practices; and collect, analyze, and synthesize information to build, present, and defend an argument.

ALJ Holds “Your Change Can Change the World” Fundraiser

During the holiday season, Arthur L. Johnson students collected $805 to buy gifts for families in need in their “Your Change Can Change the World” fundraiser. Students collected change during lunch to raise the funds. Each class adopted one family and received a wish list. Wishes ranged from socks, sweatshirts, and basketballs to Barbies, make-up, and ShopRite gift cards. Several other school organizations and classes including Miss Mills’ class, SMAC, football, Spanish National Honor Society, Science National Honor Society, the Science Department, Italian Club, Key Club, and French Club also collected on behalf of the families. Faculty, staff, and administration used an “Electronic Giving Tree” to provide gifts for six additional families. A district-wide jeans day was also held where the money raised was used to buy coats, toys, and additional ShopRite gift cards.

Anne Marciano, ALJ math teacher and fundraiser organizer, stated, “I am so proud of all of our students. I started this program as a way to make the students more aware of the situations that other children are in during the holidays. I wanted them to donate their money so it would mean something to them. As our posters say, your change can change the world.” Marciano would also like to thank the Clark ShopRite who supports the program every year. They donated $250 worth of gift cards.

On Tuesday, December 19, 2017, the Arthur L. Johnson Athletic Department held a breakfast in honor of the 2017 Fall Athletics G.P.A. Challenge winners, the Gymnastics Team, with a collective G.P.A. of 3.9678. The Crusader G.P.A. Challenge is awarded each season to the team that finishes with the highest overall G.P.A. amongst athletic teams seasonally. Members of the team include Angela Pieros, Morgan Thomas, Lindsay Becker, Nicalina DelRosario, Kaitlyn King, Christina Sheafer, and Emi Budnik.
Fifth grade students at Hehnly School are studying food chains and food webs in their Life Science Unit. Recently, students were partnered to dissect a sterilized owl pellet. Owls prey on small animals such as mice, birds, and moles. Since owls do not have teeth, they swallow their prey whole. Soft parts are dissolved in the owl’s stomach and digested, however, bones, teeth, fur, and feathers are non-digestible. These components are compressed in the owl’s gizzard into a hard pellet and regurgitated. Over the course of three days, students pulled apart the pellet and carefully removed fur, feathers, and bones. Using a bone identification chart, partners worked together to identify bones and reconstruct a skeleton by gluing bones onto construction paper.

ALJ Senior Signs with Cornell University

Arthur L. Johnson senior Gennaro Nigro recently signed with Cornell University. Nigro was recruited by the men’s soccer team. While at Cornell, he plans to study Finance and Italian in the fall.

In addition to maintaining a challenging course load and achieving in the classroom, Nigro plays soccer at the Players Development Academy in Somerset, New Jersey. He is an active member in the school community as an officer for the Key Club and a member of the Italian Club. Gennaro is also actively involved in the St. Agnes Church Youth Group. According to Erica Stasio, school counselor, “Gennaro is an outstanding all-around student-athlete. He puts as much effort into his studies as he does into playing soccer. It comes as no surprise to see him signing with an institution as prestigious as Cornell.”

Stasio, in addition to Nigro’s family, Superintendent of Schools Edward Grande, and other administrators, including ALJ’s Principal Jennifer Feeley and Assistant Principal Edward Bucior, were in attendance at the signing. Principal Jennifer Feeley stated, “Our school is extremely proud of Gennaro and his accomplishments. We can’t wait to see what the future holds for him.”

Pictured is the Johnson Bowling Team, who captured the North II Group 1 State Sectional Tournament, their first NJSIAA North Jersey, Section 2 Group 1 championship since 2014.

“This year’s team has shown a tremendous growth from their averages to their spare shooting and at the state tournament this year all of their hard work and efforts paid off. I’m so proud of them all!” Said, Coach Michele Zaleski.
Hehnly Fifth Graders
Learn about Colonial
America Thanks to
CEF Grant

Thanks to a generous grant from the Clark Education Fund, the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts turned back the clock to the 1700’s for the fifth grade students of Hehnly Elementary School. The museum’s program, Tradesman & Community, visited the school giving students an opportunity to discuss the trades, materials, methods, and products of Colonial America.

To learn about the need for a strong community and local trade, students participated in a group activity. Students explored the “community web” and the roles and contributions of Early American tradespeople. Seated in a circle, each student assumed the identity of a tradesperson, such as apothecary, cooper, harness maker, and confectioner. The students were asked to think about how each tradesperson depended upon others for his or her livelihood as well as the natural resources available. Using a long string to link the tradespeople, a web was created demonstrating that a strong community was necessary for survival. In addition, students became “apprentice” tinsmiths and completed a punched-tin craft, using iron nails and handmade hammers to complete their designs to take home.

Hehnly K-Kids
Host J.O.Y. Social

The Hehnly K-Kids club hosted the ninth annual J.O.Y. Social, which is a special event that stands for Joining Older and Younger generations together. Ninety students and their special guests all enjoyed the quality time together by having ice cream sundaes and playing bingo. The Hehnly K-Kids, led by Donna Kircher, is part the Kiwanis Club of Clark, a community service volunteer organization.

“Students and their guests really enjoyed this special event. It’s something we look forward to every year,” stated Kircher.

Hehnly School Raises Money for Childhood Cancer

Over 150 students from kindergarten through fifth grade had a blast “Cruisin’ Through Winter” in the Hehnly auditorium. The 4th annual dance, organized by physical education teacher Joe Sortino, was held to support Alex’s Lemonade Stand, a foundation that builds awareness and raises money for childhood cancers. Encouraging exercise for a good cause, Mr. Sortino and the Hehnly students raised over $900 to donate to the organization. Sortino stated, “I’m so proud of the Hehnly school community coming together for this great cause!”

Throughout the night, students participated in many dances including the Cha Cha Slide and Macarena. Just Dance was set up on the projector screen so students could dance along. The PTA also generously donated free lemonade and pretzels to the students.
The Frank K. Hehnly Student Council challenged each class to a “Random Acts of Kindness” competition. The students were excited to participate in the challenge, and kindness spread quickly throughout the school. Some acts of kindness included saying hi to someone new, picking up litter and putting it in a trash can, and telling someone why they are a good friend. While all the classes had an overwhelming response, Mrs. Camillo’s fourth grade class came in first place with 152 beautiful acts of kindness. Mrs. Hayes, one of the Student Council advisors, was very pleased with the competition. She stated, “Mrs. DeVita and I were so proud of everyone who participated in the Student Council challenge. Keep up the acts of kindness!”

Hehnly Overflows with Kindness

High School Athletes Read for Preschool Students

On Friday, March 02, 2018, members of the Crusader Athletic Leadership Council participated in the Clark School District’s “Read Across America Day” at the Clark Pre-School. C.A.L.C. members went into the four classrooms and read multiple children’s books to each classroom. In addition, the teachers had a multitude of activities relating to Dr. Seuss and reading that incorporated C.A.L.C. members and pre-school students alike. C.A.L.C. members xxx, xxx, and xxxi all took turns reading and discussing various children’s books with the students.

Dr. Seuss’s birthday kicks off a month of reading across the nation to raise awareness about the importance of children’s literacy. Special guest readers will be visiting the preschool classrooms throughout March. Research shows that early literacy plays a key role in the enabling of learning experiences that are linked with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates, and enhances productivity in adult life.

Gus Kalikas, Athletic Director at Arthur L. Johnson High School, commented “The C.A.L.C. was thrilled to be able to assist with the Clark School District’s Read Across America events at the Clark Pre-School. It was fun watching the High School Student Athletes as they interacted with the young children, and I think both groups not only enjoyed the experience, but learned a lot while doing it.”

The C.A.L.C. would like to thank Mrs. Consiglio, Mrs. LaManna, Ms. DeVizio, Mrs. Gordon and Surprise Cat and the Hat Lori Menzo (Preschool Staff), Mrs. Kowalski, and everyone associated with the Clark Pre-School for welcoming us and allowing us to be a part of a fabulous day.
Hofschneider Receives High School Heisman

On Feb. 05, Lindsey Hofschneider, senior at ALJ, was named a High School Winner of the Wendy’s High School Heisman award. She will receive a certificate in recognition of her leadership both on the track and in the classroom.

Lindsey has been a stand-out athlete throughout her years at ALJ. Her contributions to the cross country and track and field teams are significant, most notably being an NJSIAA State Group qualifier and taking 6th place in the DMR at the NJSIAA State Relays. Lindsey has been a valuable member of both teams since her freshman year, and has run a 5:31 (1600) and a 2:27 (800) during her career. Her value to her teams is evident, as she was named the Best Teammate Award winner numerous times throughout her high school career for both programs.

In school, Lindsey has been able to carry a high grade point average in honors and Advanced Placement level courses. She is the Vice President of DECA, Student Council, the National Honor Society, and the Science National Honor Society. Additionally, she participates in the Crusader Athletic Leadership Council, Heroes and Cool Kids, Peer Leadership, and was recently named the Student of the Month for January 2018.

About Wendy’s High School Heisman

The Wendy’s High School Heisman was created by Wendy’s founder Dave Thomas in 1994. Dave Thomas dropped out of high school when he was 15 years old in order to work full-time and went on to become one of the most successful entrepreneurs in history. While this nontraditional path led to his prosperity, it always worried Dave that others would follow in his footsteps and expect to achieve similar fame and wealth by not finishing high school or attending college.

Faced with this dilemma, at 61 years old, Dave enrolled at Coconut Creek High School in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and received his General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Inspired by this moment and with a desire to celebrate the outstanding achievements of youth in America, he launched the Wendy’s High School Heisman program.

Twenty-two years later, Wendy’s High School Heisman has honored more than 600,000 of the nation’s most esteemed high school seniors who share Wendy’s values of giving back to their communities, treating people with respect, continuing education and excelling on the athletic field.

Turek Smashes 20-Year-Old Record

On November 23, 2017, Joseph Turek, senior football player at ALJ, broke the school’s single season and all time rushing records during the Crusader’s Thanksgiving Day Game versus Rahway High School. Joe did it in incredible fashion, rushing for over 240 yards on the day. Joe has been a starter for the football team since his sophomore year, and helped the Crusader football squad to 20 wins over the last three seasons, including winning the school’s first Division Championship (Valley Division) since the 2006 season. Joe is also a standout baseball player for the Crusaders where he has been manning 1st base since his freshman year. Joe was named first Team Group 2 All State in the sport of baseball and has been an all-county player in the sport as well. Most importantly, Joe has been able to maintain an impressive grade point average in Honors and Advanced Placement level courses. He participates in the Crusader Athletic Leadership Council as well as many other school activities. According to Athletic Director Gus Kalikas, “Not only did he break a record that was over 20 years old, he did it in the most unassuming manner. Joe always put his teammates first and valued winning over any individual accolades.”
Clark Elementary Schools Raise Awareness about Autism

The Valley Road and Hehnly School’s LINKS (Looking Into the Needs of Kids) program raised awareness about autism during their December meeting. “The advisors and I felt that each month we want to focus on our mentors learning about different disabilities because this understanding will help them to become more socially responsible citizens,” said School Counselor Sarah Badillo. The mentors were placed into groups and learned about some of the situations someone with autism may experience. Students Sara Ponik and Ella Szarszewski of Hehnly School said it made them want to help others. At the end of the meeting, an advisor from each building shared facts about autism.

Valley Road Students Celebrate President’s Day

In honor of President’s Day, students at Valley Road School in Clark celebrated the lives of our presidents and their contributions to the United States. Ms. Czarnecki, the technology teacher, engaged the class in a discussion about the leadership qualities of a good president. Students learned about the many skills one needs to lead the people of the United States. Additionally, students took virtual tours of the inside and outside of the White House. The lesson culminated in grades K - 5 classes completing “If I Were President…” projects where they shared the first thing they would do as president, the characteristics needed, the best and worst part of the job, as well as a law they would enact.

Czarnecki stated, “The students’ responses were thoughtful and meaningful. They focused on making the world a better place through kindness and respect for one another. I’m really proud of the work they did and the thoughts they shared.”

Valley Road Fifth Graders Participate in Colonial Job Fair

Fifth grade students at Valley Road School recently participated in a Colonial Job Fair organized by fifth grade teachers Bryan Lowe, Nicole Reagan, and Kelly Williamson. Prior to the event, in class, students were given a profession from Colonial times to research. They were then asked to create a project reflecting the job’s importance, qualifications, responsibilities, and location. Students dressed in clothing from the time period, brought in items reflective of the period, and even learned a Colonial dance with the help of Ms. Sauer, the school’s music teacher. Principal Joe Beltramba stated, “Seeing the children participate in the Colonial dance earlier in the day was a thrill. The dance was a nice integration of Colonial history and music.”

Parents, teachers, and administrators were invited into the gym for the job fair where students shared what they learned from the perspective of someone in their profession. The teachers all noted how excited the students were to participate in this research project. Beltramba continued, “The teachers made history come alive for our students. This lesson was a great experience for students to demonstrate their knowledge of Colonial times and have fun in the process! They were well-prepared and did a great job assuming the role of their job!”
Clark Public School District’s Parent University Hosts Film Event - Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age

The Clark Public School District recently hosted a viewing of the award-winning film Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age. The documentary, created by physician and filmmaker Delaney Ruston, explored how screen time impacts child development and offered solutions on what parents can to do empower their children in today’s digital world. Several topics were discussed including the impact of screen time on the brain, the ability to teach self-control, multi-tasking and avoidance, bullying and digital devices, the power of addiction, and parents as a role model.

After the film, School Counselor Steve Acosta and Student Assistance Counselor Steve Kaelblein led a discussion on the topic where parents and children shared their own experiences in addition to what resonated with them about the film. Statistics about students’ use of screen time were also discussed with attendees.

Supervisor of Educational Initiatives Christine Casale Broski stated, “This is such an important conversation to have given the role digital devices play in our lives. Teaching our children to become responsible digital citizens and helping them maintain balance in their lives is critical. We hope that those who attended the event found the information shared valuable.”

The film viewing is part of the district’s Parent University program, which includes community education nights, parent teas, and other assembly-type programs. The program also includes virtual sessions that can be found on the district’s website under Parent University as well as on the district’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

Arthur L. Johnson Theater Department Takes on Classics: A Streetcar Named Desire and Sweeney Todd

The Arthur L. Johnson Drama Department presented the original stage version of A Streetcar Named Desire for the fall play. First produced on the Broadway stage in 1947, it was performed on the ALJ stage in November, starring a very talented cast of high school performers: Anthony Whitman as Stanley Kowalski, Katlyn Ashley as his wife Stella, Emma Knutson as her sister Blanche, and Ty Dobbins as love interest, Mitch.

The play, rarely seen on high school stages, but an integral part of the high school’s English curriculum, was a huge success.

The spring musical, Sweeney Todd promises to thrill as well. Director Peter Nevargic could not be more proud of these extremely talented young performers as they tackle Stephen Sondheim’s haunting and challenging score, play on a gorgeous multi-level set, all while being accompanied by a 25-piece orchestra predominately comprised of ALJ musicians. The cast includes performers of all grade levels and especially ALJ seniors, Anthony Whitman, Emma Knutson, Katlyn Ashley, Gabby Smith, John Gregorio and Ryan Rutano in their farewell performances.

Nevargic says, “This production of Sweeney Todd is a truly collaborative effort, bringing together ALJ’s Drama, Art and Music departments, including many alumni, who have come back to be a part of this once in a lifetime theatrical event!”

Don’t miss Sweeney Todd, which promises to be, “one of the most exciting musicals ever presented on the ALJ stage.”

Performances are scheduled for 7 p.m. on March 22, 23, and 24. Tickets can be purchased at the door.
Valley Road Students Participate in Community Service to Raise Awareness

Members of the Valley Road School K-Kids Club and Student Council blended community service, global studies, social skills development and FUN when they met with child refugees from Liberia, West Africa.

A holiday celebration is held each December at the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Newark for members of the African Immigrant Ministry (AIM). The former pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Clark, Rev. Andrew J. Dzurovcik, initiated this program many years ago to assist families who had escaped a civil war in their homeland for opportunities in America. The new pastor, Pastor Grewes, has continued this work.

The children and other attendees gathered at the church center for a morning of reflection on the season, crafts, pizza, and gift giving. Valley Road School students and parents assisted with craft-making, helped to serve the food for a shared meal, and learned what children have in common – the ability to enjoy one another and to have fun regardless of differences in personal backgrounds.

According to Principal Joe Beltramba, “The members of the Valley Road Student Council and K-Kids made us proud for their willingness to help others, their ability to be accepting of diversity, and the maturity and kindness they showed as they donated their time to a valuable community service project.”

Staff members who attended the trip were Sue Dzurocvik and Linda Koepfler, two of the K-Kids advisors; Bryan Lowe, a teacher; Mallory Applebaum, the school’s assistant principal; and Joe Beltramba the school’s principal. Jen Guenther and Nicole Reagan of the VRS Student Council, and Paula Spence and Kim Belverio, also of K Kids, as well as those listed above helped organized the trip. Many PTA parents also attended the trip.

Andy WarholInspires Third Graders at Valley Road School

At Valley Road School, Ms. Krick’s third graders learn about a famous Spotlight Artist each month as part of an interdisciplinary unit. The artist’s life and work are incorporated cross-curricularly. For example, Picasso’s cubist work helped students understand 3 dimensional shapes in math, and Norman Rockwell’s “Rosie the Riveter” and paintings of soldiers were a perfect fit for Veteran’s Day in November.

Recently, the class learned about Andy Warhol and his contributions to Pop Art. As a culminating activity, they enlisted the help of the other third grade classes to create an Andy Warhol display in the foyer at Valley Road School.

Inspired by Warhol’s “Campbell’s Soup Cans,” each third grader created a version of a Campbell’s soup label with varieties ranging from “Gingerbread Soup” to “Watermelon Soup.” The labels are assembled in a mural entitled “VRS is a Souper School.” An array of real cans of Campbell’s soup, donated by third grade families, completed the display. The soup will be given to a local food bank. Donations are still being accepted.

In addition to Picasso and Rockwell, students have learned about Keith Haring, Rene Magritte, and Frida Kahlo. Future artists will include Henri Matisse, Georgia O’Keefe, and Edward Hopper.
What’s New at the Clark Preschool

In January, the new Clark Public Library Children’s Librarian Associate, Stephanie Azzaro, visited for story time and a brief talk about the library. The children were delighted with Ms. Stephanie’s book selection and her animated story telling. Reading to children is a very important pre-literacy activity and foundation for academic excellence. Books have the power to benefit preschoolers in many ways. Some of the benefits of reading to preschoolers include higher aptitude for learning, reinforcement of basic sounds that form language, and the attaining valuable communication skills. A field trip to the library is planned in the spring.

The month of February was packed with activities at the Preschool. At the Clark seniors monthly meeting on February 1st, preschoolers presented handcrafted valentine cards to each senior, which were received with gratitude.

The Westfield Pediatric Dental Group sent a representative to visit for Dental Awareness Month. She demonstrated proper teeth brushing with Henrietta the stuffed dinosaur following up with a short video. She taught the children about the importance of flossing teeth daily and visiting the dentist regularly. She also talked about proper nutrition, nutrition labeling on foods, and better snack choices according to their sugar content.

The nurse will present “My Plate” unit to the classrooms throughout March, designated as nutrition month. The nutrition unit is taught in order to help the children develop better eating habits and expose them to foods they may not experience in their daily diets. The children will celebrate Dr. Seuss’ Birthday and Read Across America in March as well.
Arthur L. Johnson High School
Filmed for Classroom Close-up NJ

Classroom Close-up NJ, a fifteen-time Emmy® award-winning show, recently filmed a segment at Arthur L. Johnson High School entitled “Civics Unplugged”. Classroom Close-up NJ airs on NJTV every Sunday at 7:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. ALJ’s segment will air on May 13th and June 10th. (Consult your local television guide for the NJTV channel).

According to Civics Unplugged Advisor and ALJ Teacher Frank Stebbins, “Classroom Close-up’s interest in our group was extremely inspiring for my students as well as myself. The efforts of the show and Civics Unplugged to invest time and resources into a topic as important as civic engagement with our students shows the effectiveness of collaborative programming in and outside of the classroom. I could not have been prouder of the efforts of the group of students during the filming and throughout the year as Civic Unplugged fellows.”

Now taping its twenty-fourth season, Classroom Close-up NJ, a co-production of the New Jersey Education Association and NJTV, features innovative programs occurring in public school classrooms. Each half-hour program shows how caring school professionals inspire and motivate students. Every week, the excitement of learning comes alive as teachers, education support professionals, children, and parents work together for success.

Stebbins continued, “It was a really great experience, and all parties involved were extremely impressed by the program as well as the participating students.”